

STATE OF COLORADO



Colorado Department of Human Services

people who help people

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

George J. Kennedy, Deputy Executive Director

1575 Sherman Street
Denver, Colorado 80203-1714
Phone 303-866-4426
FAX 303-866-4214
www.cdhs.state.co.us



Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor

Karen L. Beye
Executive Director

December 20, 2010

The Honorable Mary Hodge
Chair, Joint Budget Committee
Legislative Services Building, 3rd floor
200 East 14th Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80203

Dear Senator Hodge:

This report is sent pursuant to 19-3-214, C.R.S., which requires:

“Placement Reporting. (1) Each county department shall maintain and update on a monthly basis a report of the number of children who have been removed from their homes and placed in the temporary custody of the county department for the preceding month. The report shall indicate whether a child who has been placed out of the home has been placed with relatives. (2) The state department shall submit an annual report to the joint budget committee of the general assembly no later than December 1 of each year that compiles the monthly reports of the number of children who have been placed out of the home in each county or city and county for the preceding year as required pursuant to subsection (1) of this section”.

The counties accomplish the required reporting by entering information into the State’s automated system, Trails. The attached data report was accessed from Trails for the information analyzed in this letter. The timeframe for the Trails report is September 1, 2009 - August 31, 2010 and provides cumulative data for each county. The categories that are listed are as follows:

Column 1: *Identified county*

Column 2: *Number of children* – This is an *unduplicated* count of children who were removed from their home at some point during the year.

Column 3: *Number of removals* – This is the *duplicated* count of the number of children who were removed from their home at some point during the year. More than one removal occurred for some of the children during the timeframe of the report.

Column 4: *Placed in county custody* – Of the children who were removed from their homes, this indicates the number of children who were placed in the legal custody of the county departments. The number of children who are in the custody of county departments is significantly lower than the number of removals (both duplicated and unduplicated count columns in 2 and 3 respectively). This may occur for a number of reasons. For example, when children are in imminent danger, the county department or local law enforcement may release the child to a relative or another individual who has a relationship with the child. The relative or individual will provide safety for the child until the family issues can be resolved. In another scenario, the county department may recommend to the court with jurisdiction that the child be released to the care and custody of the relative or identified caretaker. In some cases, the child will be released to the non-custodial parent and the county does not pursue custody.

Column 5: *First service entered kinship care* – This is the number of children who were placed with relatives or individual(s) with a known relationship to the child(ren) and who were not certified kinship foster parents. With this type of placement the following generally occurs:

- The child(ren) is eligible for Medicaid benefits.
- The caregiver is eligible to receive child-only TANF payments if within the fifth (5th) degree of kinship.
- The caregiver is awarded custody of the child(ren) through the court with jurisdiction. In some situations a voluntary placement agreement may be in effect for up to ninety (90) days before court oversight is required.
- The placement is likely to last an extended period of time.

Column 6: *First service entered kinship foster care* – This is the number of children who were placed with a relative or individual with a known relationship to the child(ren) and who was certified as the foster parent. The following occurs:

- The child(ren) is generally eligible for Medicaid benefits.
- The caregivers receive foster care maintenance reimbursement.
- The county department has custody of the child(ren) through a Dependency and Neglect action. In some cases a voluntary placement agreement may be in effect with court oversight.

Summary from the Reporting Period: September 1, 2009 - August 31, 2010

During this period, 5,139 children (*unduplicated count*) were removed from their family or caretaker homes statewide. Of these, approximately 84% of the removals occurred in the ten large counties, and there were 385 fewer children removed (*unduplicated count*) from the ten large counties compared to the 2009 annual report.

Annual report	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Unduplicated count of child removals statewide	5,139	5,456	5,871	5,928	6,591
Unduplicated count of child removals in the ten large counties	4,309	4,694	5,015	5,100	5,581

In the 2010 report there were 317 fewer children (6%) that were removed (*unduplicated count*) compared to the 2009 annual report. In the latter report 415 fewer children were removed than the previous year (2008). Since the 2006 annual report, the number of children who were removed (*unduplicated count*) decreased statewide by 22%.

The following information provides examples of statewide decreases and increases in the *number of children* that were removed (*unduplicated count*) compared to 2009.

- The number declined in 33 counties, compared to 43 counties in 2009.
- The number declined in eight of the ten large counties by 2-40% (Mesa, El Paso, Pueblo, Denver, Larimer, Weld, Jefferson, and Boulder respectively), and ranged from 4-194 fewer children.
- The number remained the same in ten counties (seven small and three mid-size).
- The number increased slightly in Adams County by 33 children (6%).
- The number increased by 17 children in Morgan and Teller Counties (mid-size) by 27% and 51% respectively.
- The number increased by 1-11 children (33-72%) in Archuleta, Crowley, Gilpin, Phillips, and Yuma Counties (small).

The 54 small and mid-size counties account for 16% (830) of the number of children that were removed statewide (*unduplicated count*), which is a two percent (2%) increase from 2009. The removal of one or two children or a sibling group can significantly impact the counties' data from year to year even though it may involve only a small number of children, as demonstrated by the last bullet point above.

During the reporting period, there were 5,421 children (*duplicated count*) that were removed. This is a decrease from the previous year (5,742). Of these children, 53% (2,847) were placed in *county custody*.

Annual report	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Duplicated count of removals	5,421	5,742	6,160	6,271	6,977
Number of children placed in county custody	2,847	3,065	3,477	3,473	3,347
Percent of children placed in county custody	53%	53%	56%	55%	48%

Of 5,421 children (*duplicated count*) that were removed, 21% or 1,132 children were placed into *kinship care as the first service entered*. In comparison to 2009, this represents a decrease of 98 children. Kinship families are required to have fingerprint-based criminal background checks, an inquiry regarding any confirmed child abuse and neglect in all states of residence for the past five years, and an assessment of their appropriateness to meet the needs of the relative children placed in their care. Custody of the children is awarded to these families by the court, generally upon recommendation by the county department.

The children placed with the relative caretakers that are within the fifth (5th) degree of kinship are eligible to receive Medicaid and approximately \$128 in child-only monthly benefits through Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF).

An additional 3% (177) of the children who were removed (*duplicated count*) were placed into *kinship foster care as the first service entered*. The number of children that were placed in this type of service declined in both 2008 and 2009, as identified in the table below and consistent with a decline in the general out-of-home population since 2006. This is explained by strategies that county departments employ for decision making so the child achieves permanency through reunification or an alternative.

When a child is removed from the family home, the county department attempts to place the child with an appropriate relative. Within a 60-day timeframe from removal, the county department and the kinship caregiver determine whether the arrangement is the best option for the child and the kinship caregiver. Sometimes the kinship caregiver is a temporary resource while the county department seeks to identify and locate additional appropriate relatives as potential temporary and/or permanent options for the child. Ultimately the kinship caregiver becomes the legal custodian of the child and applies for child-only TANF and Medicaid benefits as outlined previously. Another alternative within the 60-day timeframe permits the county department to certify the relative for kinship family foster care if the relative chooses that option. All certification requirements for family foster care must be met in order to be eligible for foster care maintenance reimbursements and the county department retains custody. Of the two alternatives *kinship care* and *kinship foster care as the first service entered*, the former is used most frequently while the county department and kinship caregiver determines the best option.

When an emergency out-of-home placement is necessary for a child due to imminent safety issues and a relative cannot be located immediately to care for the child, the child is placed in a non-relative family foster care home. Federal and state laws require the county departments to conduct diligent searches to locate all potential relatives that can care for the child within 30 days following a child's removal. When an appropriate relative agrees to become either a kinship caregiver or a kinship family foster care provider, this becomes the next service entered into Trails.

Annual report	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Duplicated count of child removals	5,421	5,742	6,160	6,271	6,977
Number of children with a first service of kinship care	1,132	1,230	1,113	996	1,078
Percent of children with a first service of kinship care	21%	21%	18%	16%	15%
Number of children with a first service entered in kinship foster care	177	168	231	284	326
Percent of children with a first service entered in kinship foster care	3%	3%	4%	4%	5%
Total percent of children with first service entered in kinship care and kinship foster care	24%	24%	22%	20%	20%

Senator Mary Hodge
December 20, 2010
Page 5

In summary, from September 1, 2009-August 31, 2010, approximately 321 fewer children were removed from their homes (*duplicated count*) compared to the previous reporting period. Of the 5,421 removals (*duplicated count*), 24% percent of the children were placed outside of their home into either *kinship care* or *kinship foster care as the first service entered*, which is consistent with the 2009 report, and a continual increase since 2006, though the number of removals has steadily decreased.

If you have further questions, please contact Mary Griffin at 303-866-3546 or by email at mary.griffin@state.co.us.

Sincerely,

Karen L. Beye
Executive Director

Enclosure

cc: Senator Pat Steadman
Senator Kent Lambert
Representative Cheri Gerou
Representative John Becker
Representative Mark Ferrandino

**Colorado Department of Human Services
Trails System Report
Division of Child Welfare**

State Legislative Report
From: 9/1/2009 To: 8/31/2010

County ID/Name	Number of Children	Number of Removals	Placed in County Custody	First Service Entered Kinship Care	First Service Entered Kinship Foster Care
01 Adams	580	613	342	85	2
02 Alamosa	44	50	26	0	2
03 Arapahoe	574	608	320	115	5
04 Archuleta	16	16	10	1	0
05 Baca	3	3	1	0	0
06 Bent	8	11	6	0	0
07 Boulder	146	155	87	29	3
08 Chaffee	4	4	1	0	2
09 Cheyenne	2	2	0	0	0
10 Clear Creek	8	8	6	0	0
11 Conejos	13	13	4	0	4
12 Costilla	2	2	1	0	0
13 Crowley	15	15	7	2	0
14 Custer	3	3	2	0	0
15 Delta	42	43	10	12	0
16 Denver	1,034	1,080	555	292	0
17 Dolores	4	4	3	0	15
18 Douglas	51	53	25	2	0
19 Eagle	10	10	8	0	2
20 Elbert	28	30	14	15	0
21 El Paso	748	798	405	185	3
22 Fremont	76	83	57	8	0
23 Garfield	30	30	20	3	22
24 Gilpin	6	8	4	0	4
25 Grand	6	6	2	0	1
26 Gunnison	9	11	2	0	0
27 Hinsdale	0	0	0	0	0
28 Huerfano	14	16	10	2	0
29 Jackson	1	1	0	0	0
30 Jefferson	364	385	204	169	0
31 Kiowa	0	0	0	0	7
32 Kit Carson	11	11	6	5	0
33 Lake	7	7	6	0	0
34 La Plata	37	41	12	0	0
35 Larimer	186	196	114	24	6
36 Las Animas	29	33	19	9	39
37 Lincoln	13	13	9	0	0

State Legislative Report
 From: 9/1/2009 To: 8/31/2010

County ID/Name	Number of Children	Number of Removals	Placed in County Custody	First Service Entered Kinship Care	First Service Entered Kinship Foster Care
38 Logan	35	36	19	0	6
39 Mesa	204	204	114	49	8
40 Mineral	0	0	0	0	0
41 Moffat	15	15	11	0	4
42 Montezuma	30	30	25	0	3
43 Montrose	58	58	24	0	4
44 Morgan	64	72	31	5	0
45 Otero	75	76	63	34	7
46 Ouray	1	1	0	0	0
47 Park	11	12	10	1	2
48 Phillips	10	10	1	0	3
49 Pitkin	0	0	0	0	0
50 Prowers	5	5	3	0	1
51 Pueblo	274	294	141	96	0
52 Rio Blanco	12	14	6	2	2
53 Rio Grande	24	24	19	3	3
54 Routt	10	10	3	0	0
55 Saguache	12	12	6	0	0
56 San Juan	0	0	0	0	0
57 San Miguel	2	2	0	0	0
58 Sedgwick	0	0	0	0	0
59 Summit	10	11	2	1	0
60 Teller	33	35	17	0	1
61 Washington	11	11	6	4	3
62 Weld	199	209	94	0	3
63 Yuma	15	15	9	0	2
80 Broomfield	24	25	17	0	11
State Totals	5,139	5,421	2,847	1,132	177

Note : As the State Total for Number of Children represents distinct individual

Break

STATE OF COLORADO



Colorado Department of Human Services

people who help people

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

George J. Kennedy, Deputy Executive Director

DIVISION OF CHILD WELFARE

Lloyd D. Malone, Director

1575 Sherman Street

Denver, Colorado 80203-1714

Phone 303-866-4365

FAX 303-866-5563

www.cdhs.state.co.us



Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor

Karen L. Beye
Executive Director

November 27, 2009

The Honorable Moe Keller
Chair, Joint Budget Committee
Legislative Services Building, 3rd floor
200 East 14th Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80203

Dear Senator Keller:

This report is sent pursuant to 19-3-214, C.R.S., which requires:

“Placement Reporting. (1) Each county department shall maintain and update on a monthly basis a report of the number of children who have been removed from their homes and placed in the temporary custody of the county department for the preceding month. The report shall indicate whether a child who has been placed out of the home has been placed with relatives. (2) The state department shall submit an annual report to the joint budget committee of the general assembly no later than December 1 of each year that compiles the monthly reports of the number of children who have been placed out of the home in each county or city and county for the preceding year as required pursuant to subsection (1) of this section”.

The counties accomplish the required reporting by entering information into the Trails automated system. The State has pulled reports from the Trails system as the basis of information in this letter and the attached report.

The data report that is provided has an annual timeframe of September 1-August 31. The report provided contains cumulative data for each county. The categories that are listed are as follows:

Column 1: *Identified county*

Column 2: *Number of children* – This is an *unduplicated* count of children who were removed from their home at some point during the year.

Column 3: *Number of removals* – This is the *duplicated* count of the number of children who were removed from their home at some point during the year. More than one removal occurred for some of the children during the time frame of the report.

Column 4: *Placed in county custody* – Of the children who were removed from their homes, this indicates the number of children who were placed in the legal custody of the county departments. The number of children who are in the custody of county departments is significantly lower than the number of removals (both duplicated and unduplicated counts columns in 2 and 3 respectively). This may occur for a number of reasons. For example, when children are in imminent danger, the county department or local law enforcement may release the child to a relative or another individual who has a relationship with the child. The relative or individual will provide safety for the child until the family issues can be resolved. The county department may recommend to the court of jurisdiction that the child be released to the care and custody of the relative or identified caretaker. In some cases, the child will be released to the non-custodial parent and the county does not pursue custody.

Column 5: *First service entered kinship care* – This is the number of children who were placed with relatives or individual(s) with a known relationship to the child(ren) and who were not certified foster parents. With this type of placement the following generally occurs:

- The child(ren) is eligible for Medicaid benefits.
- The caregivers are generally eligible to receive TANF payments on behalf of the children.
- The caregivers are awarded custody of the child(ren) through a court hearing. In some situations a voluntary placement agreement may be in effect with or without court oversight.
- The placement is likely to last an extended period of time.

Column 6: *First service entered kinship foster care* – This is the number of children who were placed with a relative or individual with a known relationship to the child(ren) and who were certified as foster parents. The following occurs:

- The child(ren) is generally eligible for Medicaid benefits.
- The caregivers receive foster care maintenance reimbursement.
- The county department has custody of the child(ren) through a Dependency and Neglect action. In some cases a voluntary placement agreement may be in effect with court oversight.

Summary from the Reporting Period: September 1, 2007-August 31, 2008

During this period, 5,456 children (*unduplicated count*) were removed from their family or caretaker homes statewide. Of these, approximately 86% of the removals occurred in the ten large counties, and there were 321 fewer children removed (*unduplicated count*) from the ten large counties compared to the 2008 annual report.

Annual report	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Unduplicated count of child removals statewide	5,456	5,871	5,928	6,591	6,861
Unduplicated count of child removals in the ten large counties	4,694	5,015	5,100	5,581	5,806

The 2009 statewide rate of decline in removals (*unduplicated count*) was 415 children (7%) compared to the 2008 annual report where 57 (1%) fewer children were removed than in 2007. Since the 2005 annual report, the number of children who were removed (*unduplicated count*) decreased statewide by nearly 21%.

The following information provides examples of statewide decreases and increases in the removals (*unduplicated count*) and the number of children that were impacted.

- The number of removals declined in 43 counties.
- The number of removals declined in nine of the ten large counties by 2-35%, and ranged from 4-222 fewer children.
- The number of removals remained the same in 11 counties.
- Removals in El Paso County increased 3% (25 children).
- Removals in Chaffee, Conejos, Douglas, Moffat, Montrose, and Otero Counties (mid-size) increased slightly by 5-12 children.
- Removals in Dolores, Rio Blanco, Summit, and Washington Counties (small) increased by 1-19 children.

The 54 small and mid-size counties account for 14% (762) of the removals statewide (*unduplicated count*). The removal of sibling groups can significantly impact the county data regarding changes in the percentage of removals from year to year, though it may involve relatively small numbers.

During the reporting period, there were 5,742 removals that involved *duplicated counts* of children. This is a decrease from the previous year (6,160). Of these children, 53% (3,065) were placed in *county custody*. This is a 3% decrease from the previous year of children who were placed in county custody.

Annual report	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Duplicated count of removals	5,742	6,160	6,271	6,977	7,289
Number of children placed in county custody	3,065	3,477	3,473	3,347	2,683
Percent of children placed in county custody	53%	56%	55%	48%	37%

Approximately 23% of the (*unduplicated count*) removals or 1,230 children, were placed into *kinship care as the first service entered*. Compared to the previous year, 117 more children were placed in this service. These families are required to have criminal background checks and an assessment of their appropriateness to meet the needs of the relative children placed in their care. Custody of the children is awarded to these families by the court, generally upon recommendation by the county department.

The children placed with the relative caretakers are eligible to receive Medicaid and approximately \$128 in monthly benefits through Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF).

An additional 3% (168) of the children who were removed (unduplicated count) were placed into *kinship foster care as the first service entered*. The number of children that were placed in this type of service declined in both 2008 and 2009 in comparison to 2005-2007, as identified below. This is explained by procedures the county departments employ regarding decision making for the child's permanency. When a child is removed from the family home, the county department may place the child with an appropriate relative. Within a 60-day timeframe, the county department and the kinship family will determine whether being a kinship caregiver is the best option for the child and the kinship family. In this scenario the kinship caregiver becomes the legal custodian of the child and applies for TANF and Medicaid benefits on the child's behalf as outlined above. Another alternative within the 60-day timeframe allows the county department and the relative caregiver to determine whether becoming a certified kinship family foster care home is the best option. This requires the kinship family to meet foster care certification requirements in order to be eligible for foster care maintenance reimbursements and the county department retains custody. If the relative child is Title IV-E eligible, county departments are required to reimburse at the same rate as other family foster care homes. As a result, *kinship care as the first service entered* is used most frequently while the county department and kinship family determines the best option.

In addition, when an emergency out-of-home placement is necessary for a child due to imminent safety, and a relative cannot be located immediately to care for the child, then the child is placed in a non-relative family foster care home. A new statute requires the county departments to conduct diligent searches to locate all potential family members who can care for the child within 30 days following a child's removal. When a family member that can assure the child's safety agrees to become either a kinship caregiver or a kinship family foster care provider, this becomes the next service entered.

Annual report	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Unduplicated count of child removals	5,456	5,871	5,928	6,591	6,861
Number of children with a first service of <i>kinship care</i>	1,230	1,113	996	1,078	953
Percent of children with a first service of <i>kinship care</i>	23%	19%	17%	16%	14%
Number of children with a first service entered in <i>kinship foster care</i>	168	231	284	326	297
Percent of children with a first service entered in <i>kinship foster care</i>	3%	4%	5%	5%	4%
Total percent of children with first service entered in <i>kinship care</i> and <i>kinship foster care</i>	26%	23%	22%	21%	18%

Senator Moe Keller
November 27, 2009
Page 5

In summary, from September 1, 2008-August 31, 2009, approximately 8% (415) fewer children were removed from their homes (unduplicated count) compared to the previous reporting period. Of the 5,456 removals (unduplicated count), 26% percent of the children were placed outside of their home into either *kinship care* or *kinship foster care as the first service entered*, which is a steady increase in the use of these services since 2005.

If you have further questions, please contact Mary Griffin at 303-866-3546 or by email at mary.griffin@state.co.us.

Sincerely,

Karen L. Beye
Executive Director

Enclosure

cc: Senator Abel Tapia
Senator Al White
Representative Mark Ferrandino
Representative Kent Lambert
Representative Jack Pommer

Colorado Department of Human Services
 Trails System Report
 Division of Child Welfare

State Legislative Report
 From: 9/1/2008 To: 8/31/2009

County ID/Name	Number of Children	Number of Removals	Placed in County Custody	First Service Entered Kinship Care	First Service Entered Kinship Foster Care
01 Adams	487	520	282	61	8
02 Alamosa	41	42	23	0	0
03 Arapahoe	511	540	322	97	7
04 Archuleta	5	5	2	0	0
05 Baca	3	3	1	0	0
06 Bent	6	6	5	2	0
07 Boulder	231	240	153	47	0
08 Chaffee	5	5	4	0	3
09 Cheyenne	0	0	0	0	0
10 Clear Creek	9	10	6	0	0
11 Conejos	14	18	11	0	0
12 Costilla	2	2	1	0	0
13 Crowley	10	10	5	0	0
14 Custer	1	1	0	0	0
15 Delta	32	36	15	0	0
16 Denver	1,172	1,238	621	3	6
17 Dolores	12	12	0	310	12
18 Douglas	64	67	22	1	0
19 Eagle	8	10	4	0	0
20 Elbert	19	20	10	4	0
21 El Paso	804	853	480	232	0
22 Fremont	71	71	61	4	10
23 Garfield	30	34	17	0	8
24 Gilpin	2	2	1	0	3
25 Grand	6	6	3	0	0
26 Gunnison	15	16	8	4	0
27 Hinsdale	0	0	0	0	0
28 Huerfano	23	24	5	13	0
29 Jackson	1	1	0	0	4
30 Jefferson	530	556	272	203	0
31 Kiowa	0	0	0	0	10
32 Kit Carson	8	9	1	0	0
33 Lake	8	8	3	0	0
34 La Plata	40	46	12	0	0
35 Larimer	217	229	81	1	5
36 Las Animas	22	22	16	53	25
37 Lincoln	17	18	5	3	1
				0	3

State Legislative Report
 From: 9/1/2008 To: 8/31/2009

County ID/Name	Number of Children	Number of Removals	Placed in County Custody	First Service Entered		First Service Entered Kinship Foster Care
				Kinship Care	Kinship Foster Care	
38 Logan	33	33	20	2	1	
39 Mesa	195	200	114	53	29	
40 Mineral	0	0	0	0	0	
41 Moffat	15	15	4	1	11	
42 Montezuma	24	27	14	0	0	
43 Montrose	67	75	34	0	0	
44 Morgan	45	48	24	2	1	
45 Otero	70	76	64	23	4	
46 Ouray	3	3	0	0	0	
47 Park	12	12	11	0	1	
48 Phillips	3	4	1	0	0	
49 Pitkin	1	1	0	0	0	
50 Prowers	13	13	4	5	0	
51 Pueblo	307	312	194	107	0	
52 Rio Blanco	18	18	3	1	1	
53 Rio Grande	22	23	8	0	2	
54 Routt	11	11	5	1	0	
55 Saguache	11	11	5	0	0	
56 San Juan	0	0	0	0	0	
57 San Miguel	1	1	0	0	0	
58 Sedgwick	2	2	1	0	0	
59 Summit	13	13	5	3	0	
60 Teller	15	15	10	0	1	
61 Washington	13	13	2	7	0	
62 Weld	243	251	148	0	0	
63 Yuma	4	4	1	0	1	
60 Broomfield	31	33	18	0	0	
State Totals	5,456	5,742	3,065	1,230	168	

Note : As the State Total for Number of Children represents distinct individual

Break

STATE OF COLORADO



Colorado Department of Human Services

people who help people

1575 Sherman Street
Denver, Colorado 80203-1714
Phone 303-868-5700
www.cdhs.state.co.us



Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor

Karen L. Beye
Executive Director

November 28, 2008

Senator Moe Keller, Chair
Joint Budget Committee
200 East 14th Ave., 3rd floor
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Senator Keller:

This report is sent pursuant to 19-3-214, C.R.S., which requires:

"Placement Reporting. (1) Each county department shall maintain and update on a monthly basis a report of the number of children who have been removed from their homes and placed in the temporary custody of the county department for the preceding month. The report shall indicate whether a child who has been placed out of the home has been placed with relatives. (2) The state department shall submit an annual report to the joint budget committee of the general assembly no later than December 1 of each year that compiles the monthly reports of the number of children who have been placed out of the home in each county or city and county for the preceding year as required pursuant to subsection (1) of this section".

The counties accomplish the required reporting by entering information into the Trails automated system. The State has pulled reports from the Trails system as the basis of information in this letter and the attached report.

The data report that is provided has an annual timeframe of September 1-August 31. The report provided contains cumulative data for each county. The categories that are listed are as follows:
Column 1: *Identified county*

Column 2: *Number of children* – This is an *unduplicated* count of children who were removed from their home at some point during the year.

Column 3: *Number of removals* – This is the *duplicated* count of the number of children who were removed from their home at some point during the year. More than one removal occurred for some of the children during the time frame of the report.

Column 4: *Placed in county custody* – Of the children who were removed from their homes, this indicates the number of children who were placed in the legal custody of the county departments. The number of children who are in the custody of county departments is significantly lower than the number of removals (both duplicated and unduplicated counts columns in 2 and 3 respectively). This may occur for a number of reasons. For example, when children are in imminent danger, the county department or local law enforcement may release the child to a relative or another individual who has a relationship with the child. They will provide safety until resolution of the circumstances that brought the child to the attention of the authorities. The county department may recommend to the court of jurisdiction that the child be released to the care and custody of the relative or identified caretaker. In some cases, the child will be released to the non-custodial parent and the county does not pursue custody.

Column 5: *First service entered kinship care* – This is the number of children who were placed with relatives or individual(s) with a known relationship to the child(ren) and who were not certified foster parents. With this type of placement the following generally occurs:

- The child(ren) is eligible for Medicaid benefits.
- The caregivers are generally eligible to receive TANF payments on behalf of the children.
- The caregivers are awarded custody of the child(ren) through a court hearing. In some situations a voluntary placement agreement may be in effect with or without court oversight.
- The placement is likely to last an extended period of time.

Column 6: *First service entered kinship foster care* – This is the number of children who were placed with a relative or individual with a known relationship to the child(ren) and who were certified as foster parents. The following occurs:

- The child(ren) is generally eligible for Medicaid benefits.
- The caregivers receive foster care maintenance reimbursement.
- The county department has custody of the child(ren) through a Dependency and Neglect action. In some cases a voluntary placement agreement may be in effect with court oversight.

Summary from the Reporting Period: September 1, 2007-August 31, 2008

During this period, 5,871 children (*unduplicated count*) were removed from their family or caretaker homes. Of these, approximately 85% of the removals occurred in the large ten counties, and there were 85 fewer children who were removed (*unduplicated count*) from the large ten counties compared to the 2007 annual report.

Annual report	2008	2007	2006	2005
Unduplicated count of child removals	5,871	5,928	6,591	6,861
Unduplicated count of child removals in the large ten counties	5,015	5,100	5,581	5,806

The rate of decline in removals (*unduplicated count*) slowed to one percent (57 children) in comparison to the 2007 annual report. In the 2007 report there were 481 fewer children removed. Since the 2005 annual report, the number of children who were removed (*unduplicated count*) decreased statewide by nearly 15%.

The following information provides examples of statewide decreases and increases in the removals (*unduplicated count*) and the number of children that were impacted.

- Removals declined in (ascending order) Larimer, Jefferson, Mesa, Arapahoe, and Pueblo Counties by 3-27%, and ranged from 21-143 fewer children per county. Arapahoe, Jefferson, and Pueblo Counties have decreased removals in the three most recent annual reports from 2006-2008.
- Removals in Delta and Montrose (mid-size) Counties decreased by 35%-61% or 17 and 30 children respectively.
- Removals in Las Animas, Otero, Prowers, and Saguache (mid-size) Counties increased by 35%- 53% or 7-18 children.
- Removals in Park and Eagle Counties (small) increased by 48%-71% from 10 and 7 children in 2007 to 19 and 24 children respectively in 2008.
- Removals in Conejos, Crowley, and Yuma Counties (small) decreased by 50%-60% or from 12, 4, and 15 removals respectively in 2007 to 6-9 removals in 2008.
- Removals in Denver County increased by 12% or 156 more children.

During the reporting period, there were 6,160 removals that involved *duplicated counts* of children. This is a decrease from the previous year (6,281). Of these children, 44% (3,477) were placed in *county custody*. There is no significant change from the previous year in the percent or number of children who were placed in county custody.

Annual report	2008	2007	2006	2005
Duplicated count of removals	6,160	6,271	6,977	7,289
Number of children placed in county custody	3,477	3,473	3,347	2,683
Percent of children placed in county custody	44%	45%	48%	37%

Approximately 19% of the (unduplicated count) removals or 1,113 children, were placed into *kinship care as the first service entered*. Compared to the previous year, 117 more children were placed in this service. These families are required to have criminal background checks and an assessment of their appropriateness to meet the needs of the relative children placed in their care. Custody of the children is awarded to these families by the court, generally upon recommendation by the county department of human/social services. The children placed with the relative caretakers are eligible to receive Medicaid and approximately \$99 in monthly benefits through Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF).

Approximately 4% of the removals (unduplicated count), or 231 children were placed into *kinship foster care as the first service entered*. This is the lowest number of children that were placed in this type of service in comparison to 2005-2007, as identified below. Kinship family foster care families are required to meet foster care certification requirements in order to be eligible for foster care maintenance reimbursements. If the relative child is Title IV-E eligible, county departments of human services are required to reimburse at the same rate as other family foster care homes.

Annual report	2008	2007	2006	2005
Unduplicated count of child removals	5,871	5,928	6,591	6,861
Number of children with a first service of <i>kinship care</i>	1,113	996	1,078	953
Percent of children with a first service of <i>kinship care</i>	19%	17%	16%	14%
Number of children with a first service entered in <i>kinship foster care</i>	231	284	326	297
Percent of children with a first service entered in <i>kinship foster care</i>	4%	5%	5%	4%
Overall percent of children with first service entered in <i>kinship care and kinship foster care</i>	23%	22%	21%	18%

In summary, from September 1, 2007-August 31, 2008, the number of children that were removed from their homes (unduplicated count) did not significantly change from the previous reporting period. Of these removals, 23% percent of the children were placed outside of their home into *kinship care and in kinship foster care as the first service entered*, which is a gradual increase in the use of these services since 2005.

If you have further questions, please contact Mary at 303-866-3546 or her email address is mary.griffin@state.co.us.

Sincerely,

Karen L. Beye,
 Executive Director
 Colorado Department of Human Services

**Colorado Department of Human Services
Trails System Report
Division of Child Welfare**

State Legislative Report
From: 9/1/2007 To: 8/31/2008

County ID/Name	Number of Children	Number of Removals	Placed in County Custody	First Service Entered Kinship Care	First Service Entered Kinship Foster Care
01 Adams	564	592	332	61	12
02 Alamosa	47	47	30	0	0
03 Arapahoe	478	500	261	73	4
04 Archuleta	9	10	5	0	0
05 Baca	7	7	6	0	0
06 Bent	5	6	4	0	0
07 Boulder	263	278	173	62	0
08 Chaffee	4	4	3	0	2
09 Cheyenne	0	0	0	0	0
10 Clear Creek	13	13	11	1	0
11 Conejos	6	6	4	0	1
12 Costilla	2	2	1	0	0
13 Crowley	9	9	8	0	0
14 Custer	1	1	0	0	0
15 Delta	32	34	12	0	0
16 Denver	1,296	1,351	861	212	39
17 Dolores	2	2	1	0	0
18 Douglas	50	50	27	4	0
19 Eagle	24	24	16	0	2
20 Elbert	40	45	24	7	4
21 El Paso	719	757	411	207	3
22 Fremont	81	86	58	1	7
23 Garfield	50	51	30	1	3
24 Gilpin	6	8	3	0	0
25 Grand	14	14	11	5	0
26 Gunnison	25	29	9	0	0
27 Hinsdale	1	1	0	0	0
28 Huerfano	24	25	13	7	3
29 Jackson	3	3	0	2	0
30 Jefferson	543	575	295	175	9
31 Kiowa	1	1	0	0	0
32 Kit Carson	13	13	10	1	0
33 Lake	7	7	1	0	0
34 La Plata	46	46	15	2	7
35 Larimer	323	338	153	72	78
36 Las Animas	32	32	22	3	0
37 Lincoln	17	18	7	2	3

State Legislative Report
 From: 9/1/2007 To: 8/31/2008

County ID/Name	Number of Children	Number of Removals	Placed in County Custod)	First Service Entered Kinship Care	First Service Entered Kinship Foster Care
38 Logan	44	47	35	1	13
39 Mesa	190	200	114	51	7
40 Mineral	0	0	0	0	0
41 Moffat	13	13	2	0	4
42 Montezuma	28	30	14	0	8
43 Montrose	46	49	19	1	0
44 Morgan	61	63	31	10	2
45 Otero	51	51	42	25	1
46 Ouray	4	4	0	0	0
47 Park	19	21	13	0	0
48 Phillips	6	6	4	0	1
49 Pitkin	4	4	3	0	0
50 Prowers	18	18	11	1	0
51 Pueblo	379	400	212	137	0
52 Rio Blanco	11	11	5	0	0
53 Rio Grande	22	24	17	0	2
54 Routt	9	12	5	0	0
55 Saguache	15	15	13	1	3
56 San Juan	0	0	0	0	0
57 San Miguel	3	3	1	0	0
58 Sedgwick	2	2	0	0	0
59 Summit	7	7	1	0	0
60 Teller	26	27	15	0	0
61 Washington	7	7	2	0	2
62 Weld	260	272	161	2	0
63 Yuma	6	6	5	1	8
80 Broomfield	32	32	24	0	0
State Totals	5,871	6,160	3,477	1,113	231

Note : As the State Total for Number of Children represents distinct individual